

# Nietzel explains reasons for resignation

by Jason McGill

Missouri State University President Michael T. Nietzel discussed his intention to step down as president at a press conference on November 3.

Nietzel, 62, said he would remain in the post through December 2010 to allow adequate time for the Board of Governors to find his successor. Nietzel began thinking of leaving the presidency early this year, and he came to the decision to stay resign in August.

"I know Dr. Nietzel has been wrestling with this since early in the summer," said Paul Kincaid, Nietzel's chief of staff, in a press release. "It has been difficult

for him, but he is confident that it is the best decision.

Nietzel mulled the decision over until last Friday, when he first informed the Board of his intention.

He then informed the administrative staff, followed by a mass email sent to campus the following Monday, informing them of the decision.

"At both the personal and professional levels, I want and need a change," Nietzel said. "The presidency of MSU is a very public, demanding, and complex job. I have concluded that I cannot continue to do that job at a level of achievement that I want from myself and that the university has every right to expect from its

president."

When asked what role his wife's illness played in his decision, Nietzel said the personal reasons for his decision were personal, and he would not elaborate on them.

Nietzel mentioned interest in a teaching position with the psychology department at MSU, but said he had no definite plans and no one had approached him about a job before or since the announcement.

Board of Governors Chair Brian Hammons said the Board will develop a plan for the search process in the near future.

"He has been a great leader for the university and a strong spokesperson for

higher education in the State of Missouri," Hammons said in a press release. "By any measure, the past four years under Dr. Nietzel have been tremendous years for Missouri State. He will be missed and he will be very difficult to replace."

Nietzel (pronounced KNIT-zel) was hired in July 2005 after a national search for the ninth president of what was then called Southwest Missouri State University. Before that, Nietzel served 32 years at the University of Kentucky.

"Like all of us, I think his goal was to leave the university in better shape than it was when he arrived. He definitely succeeded," Kincaid said.

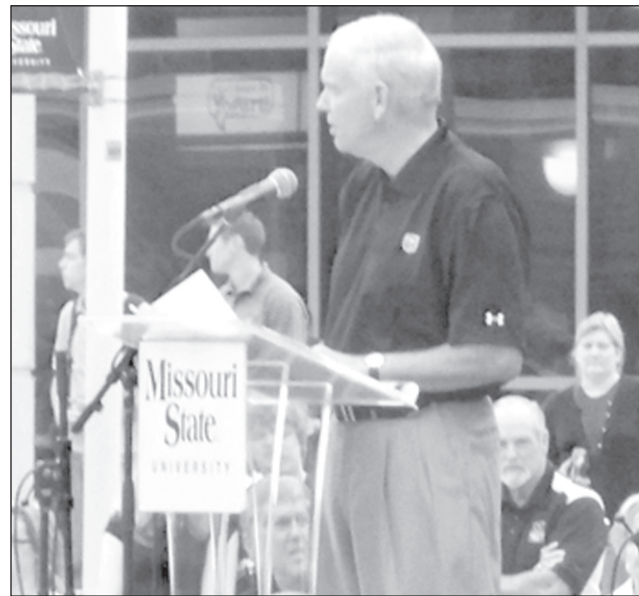


Photo by Jenna Drew  
Missouri State President Michael T. Nietzel speaks during Legacy Day in August.

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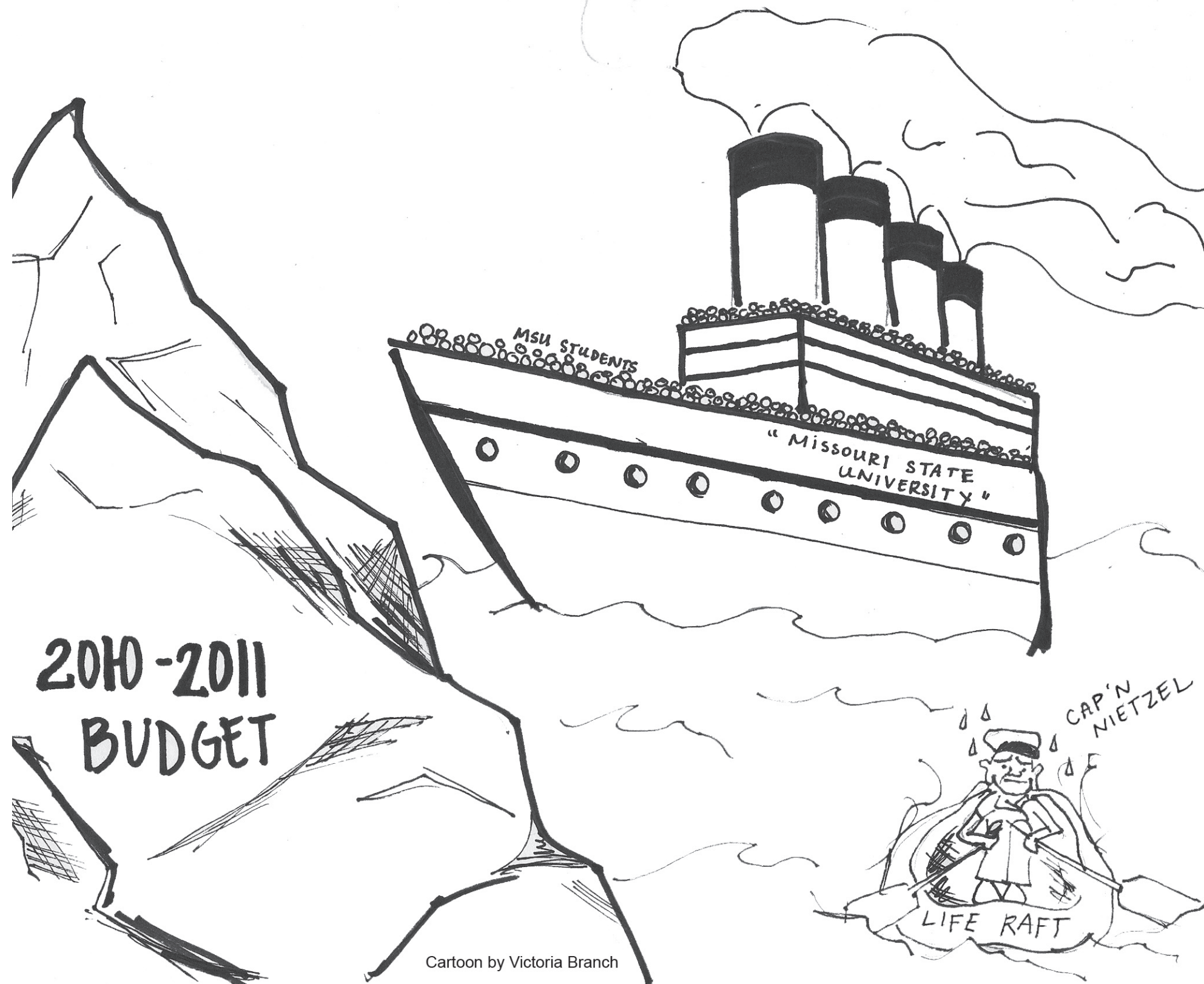
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Nietzel announces resignation



# World Cup Soccer; Flag football budget cuts; Howard represents MSU at MLB World Series

by Adam Hammons  
**World Cup almost here, Americans take no notice**  
Well, it's almost 2010 now, and you know what that means?

Yes, that's right it's just about to be another World Cup, and for those of you who don't know, the World Cup is a world tournament where soccer teams battle to be the best in the world.

Besides the Olympics, and maybe the UN, it is the basically the only thing that unites all together for a single cause.

However, in America, no one really cares.

Yeah there's a tight knit group, almost like a cult following, of people who love soccer and who try to watch Europeans play.

I say European soccer because, let's be honest, MLS isn't exactly up to par at the moment.

Why is that exactly? Because of thousands upon thousands of people in America who frown upon soccer, and that is

because... well I don't know.

I hear things like, "It's a sissy's game," "It's stupid, "It's boring." I'm sorry to say, but America's game, even though exciting at times, can be one of most boring experiences to watch on television ever.

For many, soccer in America is a sport where you play until you hit middle school and then you turn to football or hit third grade and turn to Mighty Mights.

It's ridiculous. Did you know team USA won our region and has a decent shot of going far this year in the Cup? Did you know that our goalie is one of the best goalies in the world?

We have a good team, but without support, our own league, the MLS, will not be able to support another quality national team.

Did you also know that our own Missouri State team is ranked 20th in the nation and is beating teams the likes of Creighton,

Drake, and SMU?

They're on their way to having a championship year, and most people don't even care, all the while money is spent out the wazoo paying for scholarships for a losing football team.

What does it take for the American Society to accept American soccer and turn it into the sport that everyone else in the world seems to enjoy?

Hopefully, a World Cup championship in South Africa this summer.

## Flag football champs stay home after budget cuts

Budget cuts coupled with scheduling conflicts caused MSU's intramural co-ed flag-football champions to punt on the opportunity to compete for the regional title.

MSU student Justin Drane's team won the intramural championship at MSU and normally would have competed at the regional tournament at Oklahoma State University.

In years past, MSU paid the \$300 entry fee for the intramural champions to enter the three-day tournament, but budget cuts forced MSU to eliminate this expense.

The extra cost to attend, coupled with some scheduling conflicts among team members, caused Drane to decide to withdraw his team from the tournament.

"It was really disappointing," Drane said. "We had a good coed team, and I thought we had a good possibility of winning it."

Teams from around the region will compete in the

tournament this month, and the winners will go to Florida for the national tournament.

Drane hopes to bring his team to the regional tournament next year.

## Former Bear plays in MLB World Series

For most sports lovers across the nation, Missouri State isn't exactly well known. Besides a couple great showings in the dance in both men's and women's basketball, we haven't really proven ourselves to be a top quality sports school.

MSU alum and Phillies first basemen Ryan Howard, though, may help change that as he plays in

the World Series.

Since hitting the big leagues, he's made a humongous splash when it comes to numbers and recognition. Over the past seven years he went from small town player to basically a household name, and no one is as surprised as Howard.

Howard started out in St. Louis, where he grew up and practiced baseball with his dad. When he got to high school, he was a great prospect for colleges but it seemed that no scouts were looking his way so he ended up at Southwest Missouri State, or MSU as it is now, and started his career.

Howard even had to

walk on at first, but he quickly impressed the coaching staff and earned a scholarship and a permanent spot in the lineup. From there on it was a quick few years with a great junior year at MSU, and then finally a draft by the Philadelphia Phillies in the fifth round of the amateur draft in 2002.

Howard earned the Rookie of the Year in 2005 after replacing all-star Jim Thome. He has been the NL MVP, won the Home Run Derby, been a two-time all-star and is now trying for his second World Series title. Needless to say, Howard is giving himself, and MSU, some recognition.

# In support of a campus smoking ban

Smoking is a vile, disgusting habit with no real positive benefits.

That said, we recognize each individual's right to destroy their own body if they so wish.

However, develop lung cancer on your own time and on your own property! Stop polluting campus for the rest of us!

Recently, talk of a smoking ban at Missouri State University has come up, and we would like to throw our support behind this important measure

wholeheartedly.

Beyond the damage smoking deals to the individuals who engage in this behavior, second-hand smoke also pollutes the air and damages the lungs of all who come near.

Designated smoking areas may sound like a good solution to the problem at first, but unless you are going to put the designated areas physically far away from the main campus, smoke will still drift about.

We all have a right to breathe clean

air. No one has the right to take that away from us. Smoking creates a blight on the whole campus.

How to enforce this ban, you say? Simple.

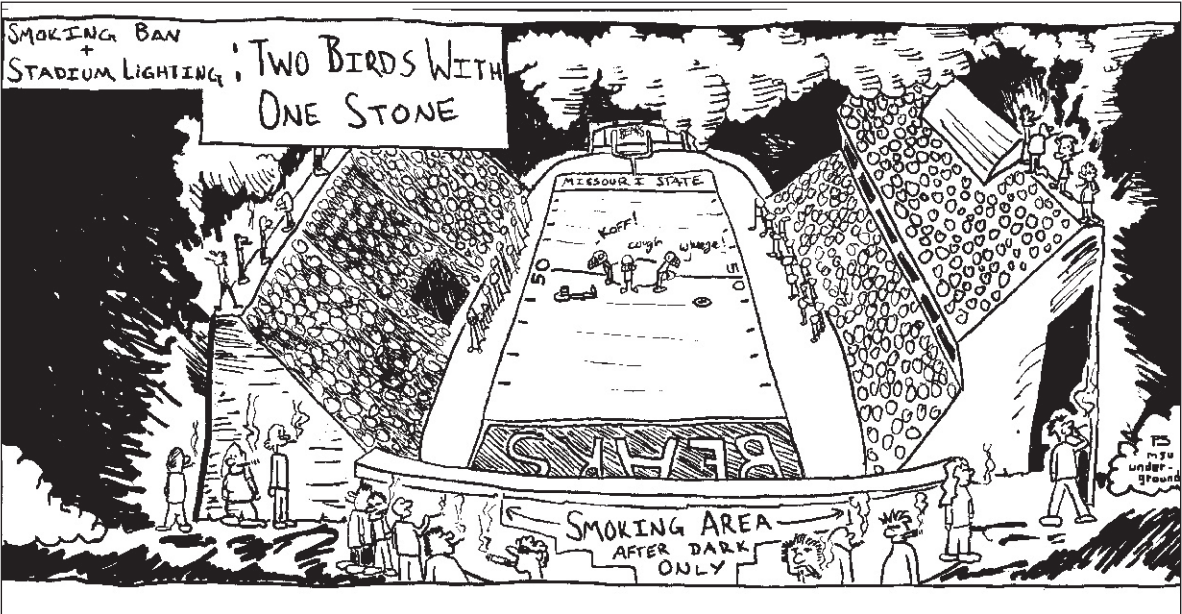
Fines. Lots and lots of fines.

Eventually, students will learn to put the cigarettes away.

Smokers can still smoke if they want to, but just take it off campus.

Students deserve to breathe easy.

**-Jennifer Becker**  
*For the Editorial Board*



## THE UNDERGROUND

**Mission:** *The Underground* strives to serve as a voice of integrity on the campus of Missouri State University. *The Underground* endeavors to comprehensively cover important events and issues on campus and to approach each article with honesty, accuracy, integrity, fairness and public service in mind.

**About Us:** *The Underground* is an independent student publication. Written and produced by a staff of student volunteers, *The Underground* is neither funded nor officially recognized by Missouri State University. It prints once-a-month, with online updates in the interim. The newspaper is distributed on the MSU campus and at select local businesses. All articles are available online.

**Submissions:** Letters to the editor can be sent via email or postal mail. Letters must include name, address, class or title and telephone number for verification purposes. *The Underground* reserves the right to edit letters to the editor and publication is not guaranteed.

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# Nietzel's resignation coming during tough MSU budget situation

As the campus community continues to react to the startling resignation announcement by MSU President Michael Nietzel, one can't help but wonder what role the upcoming budget crisis had in his decision.

In any case, we need the leader of our college to have his or her full attention and energy directed toward the difficult situation ahead. While it would have been easy for Nietzel to sit back and collect on that big paycheck, I respect him for recognizing that his head was not in the game.

You know the budget situation is looking grim when the school is going as far as eliminating a \$300 expense for an entry fee normally given to the intramural flag football champions to compete at a regional tournament (see page 7).

Scrimping, saving, and doing without will no doubt be some of the job requirements for the new president.

With all of this cost-cutting, we can't lose sight of the primary mission of any institution of higher learning; sports, obviously.

Like a butcher, we have to be careful to avoid the bone as we cut the fat out of the budget.

It seems the first instinct usually is to gouge the students. Increased tuition. Increased cost of parking permits. More tickets and fines.

Unfortunately, I am sure we will see plenty of these measures to go along with budget cuts.

Instead, I think we need to be more creative. Here are a couple ideas I had just

off the top of my head.

Remember that grain elevator Missouri State bought for \$1 a few years back but haven't done anything with? I think it would make a great billboard. Businesses pay decent money for an average billboard. Imagine what they'd pay for a giant one like that.

What about that fancy new arena everyone seems to think is costing too much to maintain?

Why don't we put JQH to good use and generate some revenue. I look on the event calendar and besides sports, I only see four special events through March. None of them are big draws in my opinion.

The Eagles came to JQH to open the place up with a bang. Why can't we get more acts like that. Maybe someone like Bob Dylan? Oh, yeah, he performed at the Shrine Mosque when in Springfield instead.

JQH is an awesome, state-of-the-art arena. I've been to arenas in big metropolitan areas and I have to say, besides its smaller size, JQH was just as nice.

We are lucky to have an arena like that for a city this size. We just need to better utilize it.

We have a great university. Let us hope our new president can keep it that way through thick and thin budgets.



Zach Becker





# Getting to know new people would be easier with better introductions

I realized something last weekend.

We as college-aged Americans are no longer specific or personal enough when it comes to introductions.

We don't know who the people we're being introduced to really are.

For example, while at a party a few Saturdays ago, I noticed a young sir introduce a girl he was with as his "friend" Tiffany.

Tiffany shot a gaze so fiery at him I thought he was going to fall over and burn in a hellish inferno.

I gathered from this exchange

"Our world would be much better off if we could just tell the truth, from the moment we say hello."

that this guy, "Bob," and "Tiffany" had quite a history, and she was less than pleased at his nomenclature for her as a friend.

Wouldn't it be easier if we could just introduce our family and friends as they are, without having to later explain to someone their true identity?

So many parties are fraught with awkward introductions, and people barely know boundaries anymore.

Does girlfriend mean someone you're in a relationship with? Or is it a cover-up for someone you've made out with once or twice? I'm imagining a world where someone could walk up and be told, "Hey, this is my guy friend Josh. We've made out a few times when we're drunk, but I won't really care if you hit on him. I'll find somebody else."

Or even, "Hi, this is my girlfriend Stacy. But she cheats on me a lot, so I'm ready and willing hook up with *you*."

And honestly, it doesn't even have to apply to dating/hooking up people.

For example, when bringing a new boy over to the house, introduce your roommate with a

"Hey, this is Susan. Try not to be out in the living room before 10 a.m., because she tends to sleep naked on the couch."

Or, "This is my incredibly nosy roommate Dave. Don't tell him anything personal about yourself, or he'll pick you to death with questions."

And best friends—we all have them – but a lot of us have ones that take a little getting used to. "This is Roxy, my best friend. Um, try not to make any jokes about her appearance, no matter how untrue they are. You WILL be dealing with rage and sobbing if you do."

And family—that could be the best. "Hey mom, this is my fiancé Kyle. Kyle, this is my crazy,

overzealous mother who possibly ruined my childhood with a little too much alcohol. She also listens to too much country music."



Victoria Branch

# A call for participatory journalism



Walter Cronkite reports from the field in Vietnam.

Welcome to the discussion! Whether you've been with us since the beginning or just picked up The Underground for the first time, thank you. You're the reason we do what we do.

Since you're reading an alternative newspaper, I don't have to convince you of the sorry state of the news media.

If they aren't framing every story as a left-right shouting match, they use the shield of so-called objectivity to quietly condone the status quo.

It's no wonder viewers, listeners and readers are seeking alternative media more than ever.

Readers like you look for something more than just the standard fare when it comes to news. You're naturally curious; you like to look into different sources of information.

You're a discerning reader; you don't take things at face value. You search for unique stories, moving stories and divergent opinions.

In other words, whether you know it or not, you were already an Underground reader before you picked up this newspaper.

As smart, savvy, independent thinkers, our readers possess all the necessary

qualities to be great journalists.

Take the next step. Join us as an Underground writer!

Famed independent journalist I.F. Stone got his start with a newspaper he created in high school called *Progress*.

From such humble beginnings, he went on to found *I.F. Stone's Weekly* in 1953, a pioneering newsletter that fought McCarthyism, racism and was the first American publication to question the official account of the Gulf of Tonkin.

There are now half a dozen awards for independent journalism named after Stone, given by organizations from Harvard to Berkeley.

Missouri native Walter Cronkite dropped out of college at UT Austin to take a job reporting for the Houston Post. Of course, his later contributions to television news were lauded at length after his death last June. His work that struck me the most was his coverage of the moon landing. Cronkite's palpable excitement belied his curiosity and thirst for knowledge.

Neither of these men had formal training or journalism degrees when they started. What they had is what you have, a discerning eye for information, natural curiosity and a love of the truth.

And you don't face nearly the obstacles those men did. You don't have to start your own publication. Zach and Jenny Becker, our Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, respectively, have done that for you. You don't need to quit school to write for this paper, either. In fact, we would specifically recommend that you not do that.

This is a newspaper in the old style; a community meeting place rather than a dry listing of the day-to-day machinery of the University. If you have a story to tell, if you have something to say, reach out to us. Shock us. Make us laugh or bring us to tears. Give voice to the voiceless. Sate the burning desire to communicate. Being part of the discussion means being part of the solution.

Stone and Cronkite are gone now. They are passing the torch to you. Come tell your story.



Jason McGill



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